current cotton season 2008-09 (Oct.-Sept.) remained steady as is evident from the Statement given below:—

Average price of lint cotton (Rs. per kg)

| Month | Short staple (20 mm and below) | Medium staple (20.5 mm-24.5 mm) | | | Long staple (27.5 mm-32mm) | Extra Long staple (32.5 mm and above) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Bengal Deshi | V-797 | Jayadhar | Y-1 | S-4/S-6 | DCH-32 |
| Oct.-2008 | 70.66 | 56.88 | 60.39 | 64.97 | 68.27 | 90.00 |
| Nov.-2008 | 72.06 | 53.16 | 58.22 | 60.96 | 63.14 | 88.59 |
| Dec.-2008 | 74.12 | 53.16 | 58.22 | 58.21 | 61.17 | 82.47 |
| Jan.-2009 | 73.01 | 53.16 | 58.22 | 56.53 | 66.63 | 79.42 |
| Feb.-2009 (as on 7-02-09) | 72.00 | 53.16 | 58.22 | 54.84 | 58.50 | 77.34 |

Source: Cotton Association of India, Mumbai.

Note: Spot rates inclusive of entry tax but exclusive of Sales Tax/Central Sales Tax.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) and (d) No reports of sickness due to price rise of cotton, which is used in the Handloom sector have been received from any of the State Governments.

**Creating silk centres in the country**

1002. SHRIMATI RENUBALA PRADHAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to create 40 silk centres in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, *inter-alia* indicating those that are proposed to be located in Orissa and Jharkhand; and

(c) how far will this help to increase production of this commodity and extend increased facilities to the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) The Government of India through Central Silk Board in close co-ordination with the State Sericulture Departments is promoting development of sericulture in cluster mode approach throughout the country during Eleventh Plan. Under this Cluster Promotion Programme, Central Silk Board (CSB) has proposed implementation of 50 cluster projects jointly with the State Governments, covering Mulberry, Tasar, Eri and Muga sectors.

(b) One tropical tasar cluster Center is being implemented in Mayurbhanj district of Orissa, covering two blocks at Saraskana and Kuliana. During the year 2009-10, it is proposed to implement 19 more cluster projects in different States including the State of Jharkhand.

(e) Under the Cluster Promotion Programme, the latest technological innovations could be disseminated in a systematic way to improve production, productivity and quality. The cluster development creates interest among other farmers to take-up sericulture mainly due to the fact that the farmers shall get constant support/guidance from the implementing agency from the stage of the commencement of host plant development till post-cocoon activities. The Cluster Programme brings in awareness among the sericulturists about the latest technologies developed and the kind of technical and financial assistance available to improve sericulture.

**Reintroduction of export market assistance**

1003. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government will propose for reintroduction of the export market assistance to boost the export of jute goods which was stopped by Government since April, 2007;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) External Market Assistance (EMA) scheme is not being reintroduced as there is no fund availability for grant of Subsidy for such export assistance. Also, such export subsidy is likely to be WTO non-compatible.

**Stock of cotton in the country**

1004. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN:
SHRI N.K. SINGH:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the size of current stock of cotton available in the country in relation to the corresponding stock last year;

(b) the current size of requirements;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Cotton Corporation of India is hoarding the stock of cotton;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;